

BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

RANDY PATTERSON,

Appellant,

v.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY,

Respondent.

Case No. ALLO-02-0012

ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING
HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE
DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came on for a telephonic hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, and GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated April 25, 2002. The hearing was held on November 21, 2002. RENÉ EWING, Member, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

Representation. Appellant Randy Patterson represented himself *pro se*. Dennis Defa, Assistant Director of Human Resources, represented Respondent Central Washington University (CWU).

Background. As a result of a class study, the Washington State Personnel Resources Board adopted revisions to the higher education information technology classes. Appellant's position was reviewed by CWU's internal position audit team, which recommended that Appellant's position be allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist IV classification. Subsequently, a CWU peer review team reviewed Appellant's position and concurred with the recommendation. CWU Human Resources staff also agreed with the recommendation and Appellant's position was allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist IV classification, effective January 1, 2002. Appellant was notified of the allocation of his position by letter dated December 19, 2001 from Dennis Defa.

1 On January 28, 2002, Appellant appealed to the Director of the Department of Personnel (DOP).
2 Appellant requested that his position be reallocated to the Information Technology Systems
3 Specialist V classification.

4 The Director's designee, Kris Brophy, conducted an allocation review of Appellant's position and
5 forwarded the results of his review to Teri Thompson, Director of Classification and Compensation.
6 By letter dated April 25, 2002, Ms. Thompson notified Appellant that his position was properly
7 allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist IV classification. On May 28, 2002,
8 Appellant filed exceptions to the Director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board.
9 Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.

10
11 Appellant works for Respondent's telecommunications services and is responsible for the
12 University's campus-wide electronic digital telecommunications system. Appellant's
13 responsibilities include installing, maintaining, troubleshooting and repairing the system. In
14 addition, Appellant acts as a project leader and creates installation plans for on-site and off-site
15 locations and is the only technician on campus with certification on the telecommunications switch.
16 Appellant works under the direction of his supervisor, an Information Technology Systems
17 Specialist (ITSS) V.

18 **Summary of Appellant's Argument.** Appellant argues that the campus-wide telecommunications
19 system is complex and mission-critical and requires constant oversight and administration.
20 Appellant asserts that a system failure would create a liability for the institution. Appellant argues
21 that he is responsible for installing a new, large-scale system that crosses multiple platforms, that he
22 has more technical expertise than his supervisor and that the scope and level of his duties and
23 responsibilities meet the ITSS V classification.

24
25 **Summary of Respondent's Argument.** Respondent acknowledges that Appellant works on a
26 complex system, but argues that mission-critical systems are those that deal with business

1 operations such as payroll, financial systems, and student information systems. Respondent asserts
2 that without a mission-critical system, the institution could not operate. Respondent argues that the
3 telecommunications system is not mission-critical. Respondent contends that the Director's
4 determination is supported by a preponderance of the evidence and is consistent with the findings of
5 CWU's internal review committees and the decision of human resources staff. Respondent asserts
6 that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the ITSS IV classification.

7 **Primary Issue.** Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position was properly
8 allocated to the Information Technology Systems Specialist IV classification should be affirmed.
9

10 **Relevant Classifications.** Information Technology Systems Specialist IV, class code 2408;
11 Information Technology Systems Specialist V, class code 2409.

12 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
13 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
14 measurement of the volume of work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
15 work is performed. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in
16 similar positions. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular
17 position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the
18 class which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v.
19 Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).
20

21 Positions allocated to the ITSS V classification work under administrative direction, perform expert
22 level work, and are responsible for large-scale, high risk/high impact or mission-critical systems.
23 Projects at this level have significant impact in areas such as research, instruction, administration,
24 public service, external customers, or other institutions or agencies. Appellant is not responsible for
25 large-scale, high risk/high impact or mission-critical telecommunications systems. Rather, the
26 telecommunications system is best described as a complex, essential campus-wide system.

1 Furthermore, the telecommunications system impacts major work groups and multiple functional
2 areas and does not encompass the scope of significant impact anticipated by the ITSS V
3 classification.

4 Positions allocated to the ITSS IV classification function as senior-level specialists and
5 independently utilize advanced technical knowledge on projects that impact major work groups or
6 multiple functional areas. Generally, ITSS IVs serve as team or project leaders or supervise staff.
7 ITSS IVs also work under administrative direction and independently plan, design and carry out
8 complex projects. Their work is evaluated in terms of its adherence to program goals or compliance
9 with laws, regulations or general institution policies. The scope and impact of Appellant's duties
10 and his level of expertise and independence fit this description. His position is properly allocated to
11 the ITSS IV classification.

12
13 **Conclusion.** Appellant's appeal on exceptions should be denied and the Director's determination,
14 dated April 25, 2002, should be affirmed and adopted.

15
16 **ORDER**

17 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal of Randy Patterson is denied and
18 the Director's determination dated April 25, 2002, is affirmed and adopted.

19 DATED this _____ day of _____, 2002.

20
21 WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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23 _____
Walter T. Hubbard, Chair

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25 _____
Gerald L. Morgen, Vice Chair